

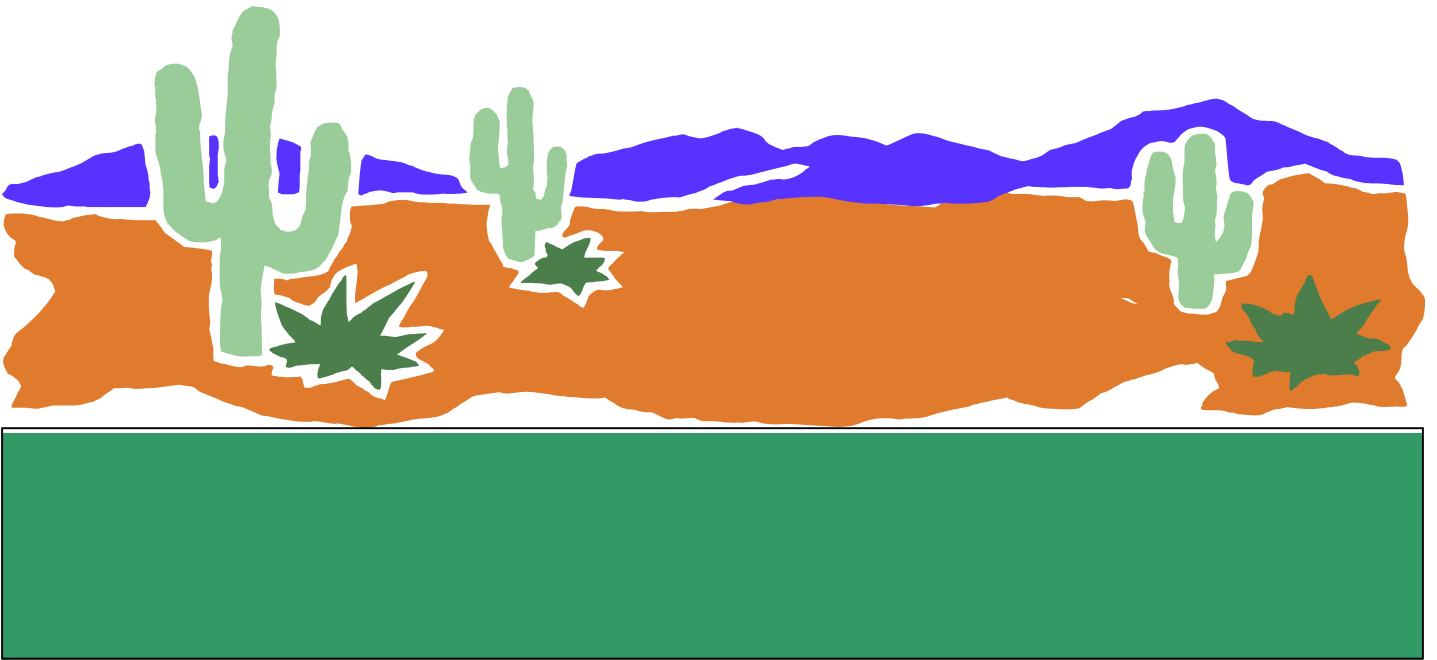
ARIZONA'S

Instrument to Measure Standards

WRITING

Sample Test Items

**AIMS
HIGH SCHOOL
FORM WA-ST-1**



Preface

Although an attempt has been made to present items and directions in the format in which they appear on the actual AIMS Writing, there will be some differences between this sample item set and the actual test. This sample set was formatted for student use without an answer document. Therefore, space is given here for students to actually construct a response for short answer items. In the actual AIMS test booklet, no lines are provided for short answer responses. Students need to construct their responses in the answer booklet. Likewise, for the extended writing item, students are provided here with space for a final copy. In the actual AIMS test, prewriting, drafting, and the Writer's Checklist is presented in the AIMS test booklet; the final copy is written in the answer document.

With the exception of those items from Form A and the *Student Guide to AIMS*, all additional items were created by the Arizona Department of Education. Although they resemble items that may appear on the test, they were not reviewed by a content or a bias review committee. Any errors are solely the responsibility of the author (an Arizona Department of Education employee) and not the contractor, CTB/McGraw Hill.

Directions: Do numbers 1 through 5.

1 Read the sentence below.

He knew very little about the subject, _____ the instructor did not provide much help.

Which word best fills in the blank?

- A** and
- B** so
- C** therefore
- D** when

2 The style manual Rachel uses notes that the words *school*, *college*, and *university* are capitalized only when used as part of a specific, proper name. Identify the correct sentence.

- A** I am applying to Arizona Western college and Yavapai Community college.
- B** My brother attends the University of Arizona in Tucson.
- C** Kate plans to study marketing at a Business School or University.
- D** Jeff is considering several options after graduation: a technical school, a Community College, or a State University.

3 A résumé is written for

- A** a classmate.
- B** an employee.
- C** an employer.
- D** a teacher.

4 Read the sentence below.

Before the group went to the movies, they _____ out to dinner.

Which correctly fills in the blank?

- A** go
- B** will go
- C** had gone
- D** were going



Directions: Read Number 5. Then write your response in the Answer Booklet.

5

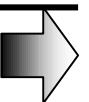
- The saguaro is the largest cactus in Arizona.
- The saguaro is the largest cactus on Kim's property.

In one or two sentences, explain which of the sentences above will more likely require documentation.

Directions: Read Number 6. Then write your response in the Answer Booklet.

6 You are a high school senior and want to continue your education next fall. Write a letter to the school of your choice requesting admissions information. Your letter should have three paragraphs and include the following information:

- Your major area of academic interest (e.g., engineering, history, mathematics)
- Why you want to attend this specific college
- How the college will benefit you



Directions: The following is an excerpt from President John F. Kennedy’s Inaugural Address. Read the excerpt. Then do Number 7.

Since this country was founded, each generation has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty....Now the trumpet summons us again....

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what we can do for the freedom of man.

President John F. Kennedy
Inaugural Address

7 Choose the dominant technique used in this excerpt.

- A example
- B repetition
- C evaluation
- D description

Directions: Do Number 8.

8 Read this paragraph from a persuasive essay.

“Home run!” For the growing number of fans in this country, the announcer’s cry on opening day signals the first score of an exciting season of baseball.

The writer of these sentences probably used them as

- A a strong conclusion.
- B an attention-grabber.
- C a supporting example.
- D a believable argument.



Directions: Read Number 9 and 10. Then write your responses in the Answer Booklet.

9 Write a follow-up letter to James Wilcox, the manager of a hotel in Peach Springs. He interviewed you yesterday for a job greeting customers at the hotel’s front desk.

Include in your follow-up letter:

- the main reason for writing the letter
- a sentence about a skill you have that is related to the job
- a statement reinforcing your interest in the job

This letter should contain two or three short paragraphs.

10 You are the manager of a small computer company. Write a memo to your employees telling them about an upcoming meeting and explain its purpose. Use the format given below.

To: _____
From: _____
Subject: _____
Date: _____

Directions: Read the following. Then do Number 11.

11 Elements of a narrative include all of the following EXCEPT:

- A plot
- B setting
- C character
- D works cited list

Directions: Read the following sentence from a narrative. Then do Number 12.

The sweet smell of honeysuckle surrounded us as we entered the garden.

12 What type of figurative language did the author use?

- A simile
- B metaphor
- C repetition
- D alliteration

Directions: Michael is writing a research paper using this style sheet. Read the style sheet. Then do Number 13.

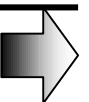
MLA STYLE SHEET for the Works Cited List

Books with two or three authors:

- List the authors' names as they appear on the title page.
- Invert the name of the first author only.
- Separate the authors' names from one another with commas.
- After the last name listed, use a period.

13 Which of the following is a correct citation for a book with three authors?

- A William McCrum, William Cran, and Robert MacNeil. *The Story of English*. New York: Viking, 1986.
- B McCrum, William, William Cran, and Robert MacNeil. *The Story of English*. New York: Viking, 1986.
- C McCrum, William, Cran, William, MacNeil, Robert, *The Story of English*. New York: Viking, 1986.
- D McCrum. William. William Cran. Robert MacNeil. *The Story of English*. New York: Viking, 1986.



Directions: Read the following. Then do Number 14.

A tip is a small amount of money given voluntarily to someone for performing a service. A service charge is an involuntary charge for services beyond the basic fee. Ideas differ on tips and service charges in restaurants. Some opinions are listed here.

1. You know that the service is good when you don't have to remind the food server of your order.
2. A tip should not automatically be included as a service charge because not all service is equally good.
3. A food server usually earns minimum wage and gives extra service to earn a good tip.
4. Service charges should be left up to the customer.
5. Tips are a way for customers to give feedback.

14 Which sentence would most likely be the topic sentence of a paragraph?

- A Sentence 1
- B Sentence 2
- C Sentence 4
- D Sentence 5

15 Which of the following is an example of first person point of view?

- A I read the last chapter of my book before I fell asleep.
- B She ran from the room in disgust.
- C No one had heard from her for days.
- D It was dark and gloomy on the morning of the game.

16 Choose the best way to combine these three sentences.

We can go to the mall. We can go to the movies. I would rather go to the game.

- A We can go to the mall, and we can go to the movies, and I would rather go to the game.
- B We can go to the mall or the movies, but I would rather go to the game.
- C We can either go to the mall or we can go to the movies or we can go to the game.
- D We can go to the mall, we can go to the movies, I would rather go to the game.



Directions: Read the following excerpt from a narrative. Then do Number 17.

I have fond memories of my best friend in middle school. We played basketball together on the school team. He had a muscular build, his veins popping out like little rivers running down his arms. When he smiled, you could see his teeth were crooked, and he had a big gap between his two front ones. He was tall and fast. He was always the first one on the fast break, and the first back on defense. He couldn't be stopped.

17 What is the most developed literary element in this excerpt?

- A setting
- B plot
- C character
- D theme

Directions: Read Number 18. Then use page 8 for your prewriting activity (such as brainstorming ideas, listing, freewriting, clustering, mapping, or drawing). Write the first draft of your essay on page 9 and 10.

18 A friend is considering dropping out of school. Explain why your friend wants to drop out and what the benefits of staying in school are. Back up your advice with logical reasons and specific examples.

Keep in mind the traits of good writing:

- well-developed ideas
- carefully selected words
- varied and fluid sentence structure
- a voice appropriate to audience and purpose
- good organization

Remember to edit for spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalization.



Directions: Use this Prewriting/Planning page for notes, lists, webs, outlines, or anything else that might help you plan your writing. Refer back to Number 18 on page 7 to do your prewriting and planning.

PREWRITING/PLANNING

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

DRAFT



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



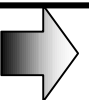
FINAL COPY

Directions: Now reread your draft and think about the Writer's Checklist below. Check every box that is a true statement about your draft.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST

- ☐ My paper has a specific audience and a specific purpose.
- ☐ My paper contains a strong controlling idea.
- ☐ My paper stays on the topic.
- ☐ My paper includes specific and relevant details, reasons, and examples.
- ☐ My paper has an effective beginning, middle, and end.
- ☐ My paper progresses in a logical order, and my ideas flow smoothly.
- ☐ My paper contains words that make it interesting.
- ☐ My paper contains sentences that are clear and varied in structure.
- ☐ My paper includes effective use of paragraphing.
- ☐ My paper includes correct grammar/usage, punctuation, capitalization and spelling.

Directions: For every box you did not check, make the necessary revisions on your draft. Then write your final copy for Number 18 in the Answer Booklet.



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Appendix Answer Key

NOTE: The notation “SA” in the Key column indicates that this is a short answer item; “EXT” indicates this is an extended writing response (essay). Please see below and the next page for the scoring guides.

Item #	Key	Form A Item #	Standard	Description
1	A		WP1/PO1	Use transitions where appropriate
2	B		WP4/PO4	Follow the guidelines of a selected style manual
3	C		WP5/PO1	Establish a clear purpose for a specific audience
4	C		WP1/PO5	Grammar/usage
5	SA		WP4/PO3	Support a statement using accurate sources
6	SA		WP5/PO1	Establish a clear purpose for a specific audience
7	B	7	WP2/PO4	Use persuasive word choice and sentence structure
8	B	8	WP2/PO3	Create an organizational structure
9	SA	20	WP5/PO1	Establish clear purpose for a specific audience
10	SA		WP5/PO1	Establish clear purpose for a specific audience
11	D		WP6/PO1	Use literary elements in a story
12	D		WP3/PO3	Analyze author’s use of literary elements
13	B		WP4/PO4	Follow the guidelines of a selected style manual
14	D	37	WP2/PO1	State a point of view in a persuasive essay
15	A		WP6/PO1	Write a first or third person narrative
16	B		WP1/PO2	Vary sentence structure
17	C		WP3/PO3	Analyze author’s use of literary elements
18	EXT	38	WP2	Write a persuasive essay

Item # 5 Short Answer Scoring Guide

2 points	Correct choice of the first sentence with a reference to the need for a source to supply comparison data
1 point	Correct choice of the first sentence with incomplete reason for choice
0 points	Other

Item # 6 Short Answer Scoring Guide

3 points	Student response contains all three bullets
2 points	Student response includes 2 of the 3 bullets
2 points	Student response contains 1 of the bullets
0 points	Other

Item # 9 Short Answer Scoring Guide

3 points	+1 point for stating a reason for writing the letter +1 point for writing a sentence about a specific skill related to the job +1 point for a statement that reinforces interest in the job
2 points	Student addresses 2 of the above
1 point	Student addresses 1 of the above
0 points	Other

Item # 10 Short Answer Scoring Guide

3 points	+1 point for correct use of format +1 point for stating time and place of meeting +1 point for a statement explaining the purpose of the meeting
2 points	Student addresses 2 of the above
1 point	Student addresses 1 of the above
0 points	Other

Item #18 - Extended Writing: The same prompt was given in Spring 1999 and in the Fall 2000 retest of students who had not yet passed AIMS Writing. Samples of student responses are provided on ADE's web site (www.ade.az.gov) accompanied with scores and comments using the 6 trait, 6 point *Official Scoring Guide to AIMS* approved by the state Board in spring 1998.

Calculation of Total Writing Score

To calculate the total score for the writing test (TW) use the following formula:

M = total points from the multiple choice items (1 point per item correct)

S = total points from the short answer responses

E = total score for the extended writing item (see Note)

$$TW = M + S + (2 \times E)$$

- **Note:** The extended writing score ("E") is calculated by adding all the individual trait scores and dividing this total by 6. This gives the average trait score over all 6 traits. Then this average score is rounded to the nearest integer (.1 to .4 round down, .5 to .9 round up). Rounding occurs only once; i.e., the average score.

Example: Suppose Trait 1 = 3.5, Trait 2 = 4.0, Trait 3 = 3.5; Trait 4 = 3.0; Trait 5 = 4.5; Trait 6 = 3.0

Then, $3.5 + 3.0 + 3.5 + 3.0 + 4.5 + 3.0 = 20.5$

Divide 20.5 by 6: $20.5 \div 6 = 3.42$

Then round this answer to the nearest integer: 3.42 rounds to 3. This is the score to use whenever "average trait score" is required.

Determination of "Meeting the Standard" - An average of "4" has been determined as "meeting the standard" in extended writing. A high school student may pass AIMS Writing one of two ways:

1. by scoring a total scale score at the "Meets the Standard" or "Exceeds the Standard" level (a scale score of 500 or better).

OR

2. by scoring an average of "4" on the extended writing essay AND a total scale score at the "Approaches the Standard" level (a scale score between 431 and 499).